

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Mikaelle Olivier and I'm from New Have, CT.

I'm writing to you today to express my disappointment with Governor Lamont's proposed budget.

Given the difficult years that our students, educators, and families have had, I was expecting to see a demonstrated interest in ensuring our education system is finally able to meet the needs of our students. These last two years have been eye-opening for many of us, myself included. It's become very clear to me that if we don't find a way to fund our students equitably and immediately, their educational experiences will never improve.

I am shocked that despite everything we've seen throughout this pandemic that it hasn't been made crystal clear that our kids deserve better. Every teacher I know has spent at least 10% more of their personal income than they did last year on their classrooms just to stay afloat. They did so with the hope that next year would be better and it is a shame that the state has moved forward with nothing of value.

Many districts were able to provide additional resources to help cope with the academic and emotional tolls that COVID-19 took on all of our students, teachers, and administrators by using federal COVID relief money. However, those funds are running out, and districts won't be able to keep those services alive without additional funds.

Unfortunately, Governor Lamont's proposed budget doesn't address the importance of continuing to fund our students by fully funding the ECS. This would allow school districts to keep offering all the resources that federal ESSER funding allowed them to, and make the transition off of these funds significantly easier.

I am urging you to reject the governor's proposed budget as it stands and consider the needs of our students as you craft a revised budget. It is past time we put them at the forefront of the conversation.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Mikaelle Olivier